1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
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276 778 The sacred flat-pipe was also used in the sun-dance. It was once captured in war. Then the man who took it had bad dreams, until the pipe spoke to him in his dream and said, "Return me, or your tribe will be [728] destroyed." Then this man brought back the pipe, and his tribe made peace with the Gros Ventre.

343 782 The making of a sweat-house was not restricted to certain persons. A man wishing success in war would make a sweat-house for another person, in order that he might accomplish the deed he had in mind. Or, if a person was sick, one of his relatives might pledge to make a sweat-house for him, just as he would a dance. In this case the sick person himself would not necessarily use the sweat-house. On the other hand, a doctor might prescribe sweating for a patient, and in this case the sick person would enter the sweat-house.

[757]

343 515 [237]

Fig. 43 (50–4388). Sweat-house Tail. Length, 36 cm.

About twelve or fourteen willow poles were cut for the sweat-house. The entrance always faced the sunrise, and a small cottonwood-tree was erected in front of it. To this, calico or other property was tied by an old man as a gift to the sun. The cloth was partly blackened, the corners being rubbed with charcoal.

When all the participants were inside, the blankets were pulled down and the house closed tight. Water was poured on hot stones, at first five times. Thereupon the lodge was opened at the entrance and at the opposite west end, and the people cooled. It was then closed again, and this time water was poured on the rocks seven times. After cooling once more, water was poured on the rocks nine times. The fourth time, the man that poured the water could put as much or as little on the stones as he wished. After the fourth time, the participants came out and bathed. [757] If they were suffering from pain, they whipped that part of the body with buffalo or horse tails. This practice made the heat greatest at that point, much as if it were beaten into the body.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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857 men were much more interested in children than they seem to be at present.

855 Just as soon as a child was old enough to look after himself—
515 say from about the age of three or four years—he would be com-
857 pelled to bathe every morning before eating. An older boy would supervise his younger brothers and see to it that they complied with the regulation—even in winter when it was sometimes necessary to cut a hole in the ice. Al says: "This is what makes one tough." Charles gave as illustration an incident which occurred one morning when there was ice on the edge of the river and snow was floating on the surface. "An older brother said to his three younger brothers: 'Go and take a plunge.' The wind was blowing and the three boys sat on the bank, each one encouraging the other to be the first one in. The older brother came behind them yelling: 'I didn't say to you boys to stay on the edge—I said to take a plunge!' Whereupon he threw each of them in the icy water telling them to wash their faces, hair and hands. He then sent them home to water the horses while he took his plunge." In case the lodge might be too far from a stream in winter, the boys and men rolled in the snow and rubbed their bodies with it. Everyone, young and old alike, bathed every day.

515 That the daily dip was looked upon as a health measure is shown
751 by the statement of Cora who remarked that when she was small she used to bathe daily in the creek and she has never been sick up to the present. Coming Daylight, too, said that she had kept up the practice until a few years ago and complains that she has been sickly ever since giving it up.

271 It was considered important for health's sake to drink a lot of
751 water too. The relatives who raised Coming Daylight used to tell her to wash her mouth out with water immediately upon arising. Further she was instructed to drink water right after eating, even though she might not feel thirsty, and to walk about after finishing a meal. She claims she followed these rules all her life and that for this reason she is not troubled, as so many of the aged are, with difficulty in controlling urination, and so on.

302 After the morning bath, all would have their faces painted all over with red paint "in order to keep their faces clean and light-skinned." Coming Daylight complained that since this practice

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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keeper (and probably the co-keeper too) could not cut his hair, but had to wear it tangled and disheveled.

The keeper and co-keeper were not permitted to bathe and swim in the creeks,—this in contrast to the Gros Ventre custom of daily early morning bathing and swimming by both sexes the year round when not prevented by ice, as a cleansing, body-hardening and recreative practice. In fact, the two were not allowed to wash even their hands and face with water, but, according to The Boy, had to use instead fat, grease or oil, and to wipe them with the same muskrat skin they used in face painting.

The keeper could not draw blood on his own person by cutting, as was done by others in the sweat lodge rite, in mourning, and on other occasions.

The keeper and co-keeper were not supposed to cry or to cut their hair in case of the death of a relative, nor to go where any one lay dead, nor to have anything at all to do with a corpse. In particular they were not allowed to give clothes, at least their own, to put on a dead person. It was a breach of this last prohibition, in fact, that resulted in Lame Bull's lameness, and his subsequent sobriquet, Lame Bull, his proper name being Under Bull.[4]

The keeper and co-keeper could not gamble or be gambled with. If the keeper nevertheless did so and won, he won not only the wager, but also the life of his opponent. The latter would meet with some fatality unless the keeper agreed to avert the evil by performing the proper rite over him. The keeper would direct the man to build a sweat-lodge and would enter it with him. The man would fumigate himself and inhale the smudge. The keeper would rub the man all over from head to feet with sage.

The keeper was not allowed just to throw off his saddle or blankets onto the ground but had to take good care of them.

According to Coming Daylight, a keeper during his term of office "could not sing the songs he was supposed to sing," but we secured no clarification of this statement. The reference may be to songs previously gotten in quests for supernatural power.

In addition to the foregoing more or less restrictive or "ascetic" observances that served to set the keeper and co-keeper apart from

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[4] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 201.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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*796 afterwards according to the Ni:hohat story or after the great deluge according to the flood story.

Ritual sweating and use of the sweat-lodge, tsë:bätc, were resorted to by the Gros Ventres on many occasions not connected with the sacred pipe rites,—skin and finger-joint sacrifices, war expeditions, and dreamed-of impending evils. Sweating in such cases will be dealt with in the proper places, as also sweating at the Feathered Pipe rites and Sacred lodges. The sweat-lodge rite was obligatory at the following Flat Pipe ceremonies: the three seasonal rites, the transfer rite (previously described), rites in fulfillment of a vow to smoke the Pipe or to paint its bowl, or to make a sweat-lodge for the keeper or for the Pipe, and at the disposal of offerings to the Pipe.

726 *796 Before a war party started out, among other ceremonial observances a sweat-lodge rite was commonly gone through. A Flat Pipe Keeper might on such an occasion take pity on the leader and members of the departing war party, build his own 31-stick sweat-lodge, and go through the sweating rite. If, furthermore, the keeper accompanied the war party, he might do the same from time to time during the course of the expedition.

*796 For the present we shall confine our attention chiefly to the sweat-lodge as used in the three seasonal rites, dealing first with the sweat-lodge itself, and after that with the sweating rite. We merely reiterate in passing that the sweating rite, while obligatory in a seasonal rite, was somewhat distinct from the ceremonial which followed it and which was carried out in the keeper's lodge.

346 *796 The Flat Pipe sweat-lodge was constructed as follows. In ground plan it was more or less circular about 7 to 9 feet in diameter, with two openings, the main larger entrance at the east and the smaller exit opening at the west. The general form was nearly semi-spherical. On each side, the northern and southern, 15 willows were stuck in the ground. The number 30 may represent a multiple of the sacred number three, and one of our informants conjectured, with particular reference to the 30 poles of lodge where He-who-starved-to-death slept fasting on the 30 successive nights. These 30 willows were arched over and woven fast into a ridge willow that ran the east-west axis of the structure. Thus the sweat-lodge was constructed of 31 willows in all.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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*796 ing clockwise each to his place with the keeper in the place of honor opposite the east door, and sat cross-legged on their buttocks, not squatted on their heels. The man who had chanted the invitations then followed them, after placing the pipe on the mound, and took his place at the left of the east door.

At this juncture the keeper's wife at his direction, brought the Flat Pipe bundle to the sweat-lodge, gave it to the keeper who smudged it three times at each of the three incense places. Then she took the bundle and went out through the west door,—all with the same ceremonial observance as at the Transfer Rite.

A live buffalo chip was put on each pi-shaped hearth by one of the attendants. Next the keeper made the smudge or incense by dropping peppermint on these three hearths,—the eastern, middle, and western in order,—with the smudge song and ritual as described for the Transfer Rite. Then followed the fumigation of the keeper's person and of the common pipe, as *mutatis mutandis* in the same Transfer Rite. Then the keeper with closed eyes prayed with the common pipe extended upward in his hands, after which the pipe was passed clockwise till it reached the man nearest the east door who passed it across the door to the inviter seated next the door. The latter with the help of the assistants who brought a live buffalo chip, lit the pipe, puffed it, passed it to the man on his left to puff, and so on clockwise until it reached the man nearest the east door on the north side. Then it was passed back anti-clockwise, without being puffed, till it reached the inviter. So the smoking continued until all the tobacco was smoked up, when it was passed to the keeper who emptied it slowly with the usual ceremony and cleaned it out with the regular stick. Then the pipe was passed clockwise to the attendant at the north side of the door, who deposited it on the slope of the mound outside in its ritual position of bowl to west and stem to east.

*796 ●515 Now the sweaters disrobed, passing their clothing to the two attendants who piled them up outside to the north and the south of the sweat-lodge respectively. The heated rocks were then brought in and deposited in the sweat-lodge pit and the door coverings were lowered. The two attendants then stretched out, just outside the east door face down, head resting on the folded

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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arms and so propped up a little (a common sleeping posture, with ears exposed to hear well and mouth free to breathe easily), and so remained during the ensuing songs and until summoned to open up the sweat-lodge coverings for breathing spells.

The keeper then began singing a song (No. 83) in which all present in the sweat-lodge joined. This was sung three times. During the singing any who wished would pray, each by himself out loud, for the two attendants outside, who were gladdened to hear this. Several could pray aloud at the same time without being distracted as they were accustomed so to pray.

Just before the actual sweating another song (No. 84) was sung in like manner.

Next the hot rocks were sprinkled by the man who had chanted the initial invitations to sweat. While he and the others sang the "hell-diver's song" (No. 84), he dipped his right hand fingers, tips joined, into the water, stirred the water with his fingers, and at the end of the song snapped his finger tips open over the rocks and sprinkled them, at the same time making a sort of grunted "uh! uh! uh!" (three times), an imitation of the hell-diver's call. Then plenty of water was splashed on the hot rocks. The same ritual and song were gone through three times.

It was during this sprinkling that they used to hear a woman's voice singing. Both The Boy and Thick have heard this voice—the former long ago when his father then an ex-keeper put up a sweat-lodge, both when a few years ago Thick's brother, then a keeper, put up one. The old people thought this woman was some holy being, but beyond that knew nothing more about her. The Boy and Thick conjectured that she may possibly have been the first woman made after the flood by Earthmaker.

The hell-diver entered into the sprinkling rite and at this point because both in actual habit and in the origin story of the flood he is associated with water. He was prayed to, "Hell-diver, help me! Come!" in the sweat-lodge rite, probably at this juncture. The hell-diver song was never sung outside of the sweat-lodge rite.

After the third singing, sprinkling, and splashing, all those inside the sweat-lodge had a good sweat, during which the sweaters

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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whipped themselves, especially on any part of their bodies where they felt sick, with buffalo tails attached to a handle. The keeper used a distinctive whip of a white or beaver buffalo tail. After the men inside had sweated a while, the two attendants, who had meanwhile remained lying face down outside, one at each side of the east door, raised the covers first of the east door and then of the west. After a little breathing spell, the covers were lowered again by the attendants, the west door cover first, water was splashed afresh, without song or ritual, on the hot rocks, and a second sweating period ensued. After this, a third one followed. Then those of the sweaters who wished took a plunge in the river, and all donned their clothing.

The offerings were then taken down from the offerings pole, and one of the assistants or some other good upright man was deputed by the keeper to take them away from camp to some knoll or mountain top or near some big rock, pray with them, and weight them down well with stones, or else, as a less common alternative, to carry them down to some stream and sink them in the water. Some of the offerings had been selected however for distribution to needy children.

No food of any kind was eaten by the participants during the seasonal sweat-lodge rite. When the whole seasonal rite itself was carried out on the three-day plan, the sweating ceremony lasted from early morning until near sundown, and was followed by a big meal.

After the sweating rite was over, the sweat-lodge was not torn down but was just left standing. Children were admonished by their elders not to play around it, and especially not to go inside it, lest they should grow slowly and be dwarfs for a long time. Even though such an abandoned sweat-lodge was still in good condition when a later seasonal rite happened to be held at the same camp site, neither the lodge or any part of it would be used again. An entirely new one would be erected.

In a three-day seasonal rite, the second part of it with the terminal feast occupied the whole or most of the third day; in the one-day rite, what remained of the day after the sweating was over. All of this second part of the rite took place in the keeper's lodge where the Flat Pipe was.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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while shells like those I wore for earrings would show. But the place was grown over with weeds and white settlers were there. The old women said: 'It is funny that they [the whites] do not *hear the spirit getting [ready] a pot of boiling* water for them.' They thought it strange that the white people could stay there."

Those few men who sought gambling power—it was never sought or possessed by women, we were told—sought it not on hill tops but in the lowlands, in the brush and timber along streams, from prairie chickens or ghosts there. The quester chose by preference a place where wild morning-glories formed a sort of bower or "tipi." The seeker would cry and when he got sleepy would crawl into the bower and sleep. In his sleep a prairie chicken or ghost would give him a song, certain rules to live by, procedures and rites to use in the hand game,—the only game in which gambling power was used,—and perhaps some powers of the legerdemain order. The person who acquired gambling power by quest would be very chary of revealing his quest experiences.[10]

Seemingly still more secretive and tight lipped were persons who acquired love power through quest. According to The Boy, our only informant on this point, "these fellows [who had it] were careful never to tell who gave this power. Sometimes they would say a 'person' gave it, but it was generally known that it came from bird or animal on the ground or in the water." On other occasions he stated: "Usually some animal gave love power," and questers "did not ask for success in gambling or love on the mountains, but on the prairies or in the brush along rivers." The being would give the quester a root to use in exercising love power.

A person before starting out for a chosen mountain top to seek major powers would, The Boy put it, "take a good bath and clean up his body well and put perfume on his body so he would smell good—those who did not use perfume would be told by the being on the mountain: 'Go away. You smell bad.'" He would also unbraid his hair and would wear no clothing except his moccasins and under his blanket his breechcloth. He took no weapons with him. "He took a lot of chances," Al Chandler commented, "because enemies might be close-by. But no enemy ever seemed to

[10] For fuller details, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946, pp. 405-09, 416.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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757 sional individuals; supernatural remedies used only by professional medicine men or women with power.

Natural Remedies

751 Both preventive and curative measures of the natural or ra-
515 tional order were numerous.

The most common preventive measure was the daily early morning plunge in the stream or roll in the snow by men, a practice carried out for hardening the body as well as for cleaning
[731] it. In small epidemics scattering and isolation were regularly resorted to in order to check the spread of the disease. The use of skunk fluid as a curative was more a Cree than a Gros Ventre procedure, but there was a Gros Ventre belief that skunk fluid diluted with water and put into the eyes of a person was a preventive and cure of snow-blindness. A mother, on knowing herself
[862] pregnant again, would cease nursing her infant lest it suffer from "bad stomach and diarrhea." Drinking the blood of a freshly butchered buffalo was looked upon as a preventive of tuberculosis.

757 Curative measures of the rational order were of many kinds. We recorded the following, but our list is far from exhaustive. All of them may best be classified as "domestic remedies," measures of common knowledge, resorted to by everybody who wished to use them, and not considered proprietary right of particular individuals.

757 Many herbal curatives came under this category.[3] The roots of
278 "sweetheart briars," so called because the burrs stuck so tightly, were used for colds, and the deeper the root the stronger was the medicine.[4]

An infusion of peppermint is now used as a beverage by everybody for "fits, spasms and stomach disorders," although the medicinal use of peppermint was formerly the monopoly of Flat Pipe keepers. A very strong drink was made by boiling a certain root and just a little of it drunk as a cure for difficulty in urination.

[3] Cf. list in Kroeber, 1908, pp. 224-27. We made no attempt in the field to
[171] get a full list of such herbal and other curatives.

[4] The Piegan, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, used these as "blood medicine."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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782 785 304 "Just before the sun went down that day, all at once I felt something touching me on my left side. It was Running Crow and the other man who stopped me. This meant that my fasting and chastizing myself were about over.

"They took off those thongs and told me to lie down in the same position that they had told me to lie in at the beginning. That is when I suffered the most. They did not take the sticks out, but just cut those thongs off and it seemed to me as if they were cutting my heart. Those fellows took those pieces that my skin was still clinging to and buried them at the foot of the post. And that is my experience. They told me to put on my clothes and I did so. I did not experience or perceive anything out of the ordinary. I just suffered. That is all.

"After I put on my clothes I found out that the skin of my feet was worn off and blistered and sore, and they sure hurt me. And to add to my aches, on the soles of my feet I was awfully sore the next morning and couldn't walk. And that is the end of my experience."

Sweat-Bath

782 515 In Gros Ventre ritual, sweating and sacrificing were quite closely associated. Invitations to sweat extended to the Supreme Being and other beings in certain sweat-lodge rites,[11] such as those connected with the Flat and Feathered Pipe ceremonies, were of the nature of gifts or offerings, and hence sacrifices in the broader sense of the term. Then, too, the sweat-lodge and sweat-bath were a chosen medium for making offerings or consummating the sacrificial rite: the pole erected in front of the sweat-lodge and the buffalo skull on the adjacent mound were intended particularly for the attachment to and disposition of respectively sacrificial objects,—offerings of robes, bits of flesh, and so forth. Furthermore, the sweat-lodge was a preferred place in which to make sacrifices of flesh and of finger joints.

On other occasions too sweat-lodge and sacrifice went together. For instance, a man whose son had been killed by the enemy might

[11] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 274-75, gives an account of sweating and mentions that "Above-white-man" was called first.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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offer a pipe to a band chief and ask him to avenge the son's death. The chief would accept the pipe and pray to the Supreme Being for success in the revenge expedition. Then the father would erect a sweat-lodge and make offerings in connection therewith, inviting a lot of "holy" old men to sweat and likewise to pray to the Supreme Being for success in the expedition.

Al Chandler gave the following account: "A young fellow would go and tell some old medicine man that he was going to make a sweat-bath for him so that the old man would pray for him, and would ask him what he [the young man] should do, whether there was a certain special way of performing the ceremony, and how the sweat-lodge should be fixed. The medicine men had all different ways. Some medicine men would have, say, 18 willows at least for the sweat-lodge framework, or others 26, or 30 at the most, with four willows called the 'head frame' oriented toward the sunrise, or the north, or other direction. A hole about six inches deep was dug inside for the heated rocks and the surface cleared about an inch down from the hole to the door. On this cleared space, shaped more or less like a truncated triangle, some design in red paint might be drawn—such as a circle, or figure of a bird or man. A dozen different men might follow one particular set of specifications in case they had all gotten the right to do so from the same [medicine] man.

"The fire for heating the rocks was made about 8 to 10 feet from the door of the sweat-lodge, and the dirt dug to make the hole in the lodge was put in a nice pile about 4 to 5 feet beyond the fireplace on the same axis therewith. The offerings made by the young fellow—such as calico or feathers—were tied on a willow stick about 6 or 7 feet long. He had also to get the rocks, to no specified number.

"When all was ready the old fellow would tell the young man to get, say, 7 to 9 old men to come and join them. When they arrived, the rocks were all heated. The young man then gave the old man [the one he had first approached] the willow stick with the offerings tied to it. The old man then went to the dirt pile, faced in the direction in which the lodge faced, and holding the offerings on [over?] the pile prayed as loud as he could: 'God,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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come and listen to me. God, come and get in the sweat-bath with me. Here is what X [naming the young man] gives you as an offering!' Then he would go on to pray for the young fellow and would tell who had given him [the old man] power to make the sweat-bath this particular way: 'You gave me this for some purpose, so you must come and help me now. This young man has gone to a lot of trouble to do this for me and you. So listen to me and help this young man, whatever his wish is.' Then he stuck the offering in the dirt pile, to remain there while they were all inside the lodge sweating.

"After he and the invited old men got inside the lodge, he would appoint one of them to pour the water on the heated rocks. The appointee would ask, 'How much for the start,' and would be told, [80] 'Four times' or maybe 'Seven times,' either four or seven. The appointee would then pour, the required number of times, just enough, say about one third of or a whole cupful, to make a little steam. Then the leading old fellow would say: 'Now it is up to you. Pour any amount you want.'

"Then all those old men prayed inside for the young man, who remained outside and had to look after the rocks and the opening up of the sweat-lodge. Every so often he had to open it up in front and back and so kind of cooled the sweaters off. It was so opened maybe four successive times, and then the sweating was over.

"The young fellow might then be told to come in, and the old fellows would kind of clean him by first blowing on their hands and then rubbing him, and when they were through they would twiddle their fingers as one does to get rid of dirt.

"This young man hired all these people and he would think that these old men prayed hard, and that he would get what he asked for, and that he would not be afraid, and that regardless of odds he would come out on top because of this faith."

The ritual cleansing effected by sweating as well as the sacrificial aspect of the rite is definitely referred to in the foregoing account, but here as in most other cases the sacrificial aspect is the more prominent. The cleansing effect was also hinted at in Sitting High's remark quoted by Al Chandler: "You have to clean yourself through this sweating."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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The sweat-bath was resorted ritually on many occasions other than those mentioned in the immediately preceding pages and passim in preceding sections. Coming Daylight spoke of it in a general way as "the thing they [the Gros Ventres] go through with when they don't want something to happen." On some of these many occasions reported by our informants there was no mention of accompanying offerings,—for instance the many sweat-baths Singer made for her sick husband (or were these purely "rational" curative measures, as may have been the sweating Coming Daylight went through for her rheumatism?). The sweat-lodge was commonly used, especially as we have seen, in connection with professional doctoring.

The sweat-bath was resorted to rather commonly—how commonly we cannot say—for pleasure, as a purely rational hygienic and curative measure, and for cleanliness. In such cases, no ceremony at all was connected with it. The keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes, if known to like sweating,—but not otherwise,—could be invited, but without ritual accompaniment. There was no mixed-sex sweating; men sweated with men, women with women. Sweating was a little hard on novices unused to the heat and steam. The white man who asked to learn about the Feathered Pipe was told: "The first night in a sweat-bath is pretty hard and beginners are allowed to lie down close to the ground." Singer, once when being washed by a medicine man, had to leave the lodge as soon as the water was poured on the stones; she could not stand the heat. Mary Ereaux' mother used to keep her head outside the sweat-lodge when sweating. Those, however, habituated to sweating, found the after-effect pleasant and soothing. As Al Chandler expressed it: "After you are all through sweating you sure feel good. You could go right to sleep."

The sweaters during the sweating whipped themselves,—"to make them even hotter" (Al Chandler), "to dry themselves" (Coming Daylight)—with formerly a whip made of a buffalo tail attached to a handle, or later of "a horse tail or any old thing."

The sweat-lodge for secular use was always beehived shaped, of bent willows framework, but no special number of willows was required.